

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

25 NOVEMBER 2010

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Access and Communities – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Coleman

CONSULTATION STRATEGY 2010-2013

1. Summary

This report presents Cabinet with the revised Consultation Strategy (Let's Listen) – produced as a result of the EIT review of Communication, Consultation and Engagement. The Consultation Strategy provides a framework for all consultation carried out by the Council, as well as establishing the processes by which it will be managed and evaluated.

2. Recommendations

1. Cabinet endorse the Consultation Strategy

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

1. To comply with the Council's statutory duty to consult

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as defined in the Council's code of conduct (**paragraph 8**) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering

questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;

- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

and must not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (**paragraph 12 of the Code**).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc; whether or not they are a Member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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SUMMARY

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cabinet endorse the Consultation Strategy

DETAIL

1. The EIT review of Communication, Consultation and Engagement identified the need for an up-to-date Consultation Strategy – the last one being published in 2007. The proposed Consultation Strategy is at **appendix one**.
2. The Consultation Strategy is supported by a guidance document (Putting Consultation into Practice) for officers.
3. The Consultation Strategy is part of a wider suite of documents that collectively outline the Council's approach to Communication, Consultation and Engagement, making references where appropriate to key partners, which includes:
 - Communications Strategy
 - Community Engagement Strategy – Let's Get Engaged
 - Community Assets Transfer Policy
 - Third Sector Investment Fund
 - Community Fund
4. Consultation on the Strategy has been conducted with Policy Officers Group, Heads of Service, key partners, the Cabinet portfolio holder, Group Leaders and CASSI Select Committee who conducted the original review.
5. An implementation plan has been developed.

6. A key action from the Implementation Plan is to update the Concordat for Members and this will be done jointly with Democratic Services and brought to a future Cabinet for approval.
7. The EIT review of Communication, Consultation and Engagement identified that there was a capacity issue relating to Consultation. This will be addressed as part of the wider Engagement Strategy implementation and EIT review that includes Business Support and Performance Management.
8. The Consultation Plan format has been revised to be fit for purpose. The plan will be updated quarterly and focus on the top level consultations. The Consultation Plan will be used corporately to monitor and support consultation activity and to offer advice and training where required. The Consultation Plan:
 - will be available on the Intranet for officers and Members
 - will be used to produce an Annual Consultation report as part of a revised approach to Council and public reporting of performance
 - will be used to create a Consultation Finder facility on the Council's website detailing current, planned and completed consultation exercises
 - will be used by services to complete the quarterly performance reports and information profiles

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9. No financial implications as a result of this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

11. The Consultation Strategy is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

12. The Consultation Strategy is published under the Stronger Communities theme. However the cross-cutting nature of Consultation means that the principles and processes apply to all the thematic areas.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

13. This report has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and has been judged to have a positive impact. No remedial actions are required.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

14. Consultation with Policy Officers, Heads of Service, CMT, key partners, the Cabinet portfolio holder, Group Leaders and CASSI.

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Education related? No

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet dated 30 September 2010 on Community Engagement Strategy.

Report to Cabinet dated 26 November 2009 on EIT Review of Communication, Consultation & Engagement.

Report to Cabinet dated 17 February 2000 which approved the original Consultation Strategy.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors: **ALL**

Property: None